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which a scuffle ensued, and the gentleman made off in the speediest manner he could, regretting that he had not his pistols with him, that he might shoot "the boor," as he never had experienced similar treatment in his life; and he was astonished, how gentlemen permitted such rascals to live in their neighbourhood.

16th Aug. 1813.

P.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

I LATELY stepped into a friend's house where I am intimate; it was in the evening of a fine summer's day. I have sometimes enjoyed here the innocent freedom of social converse at the close of the day, among polite sensible parents, and a large number of very sweet children. I found at once in the countenances of all, strong features of perplexity and distress. It seems the father, in order to provide for a grown up son, had engaged him a post in the militia, and a letter was just come, signifying that he should be ready with all his appointments on a certain specified day. I sat down a minute to witness the operation of this matter. The countenances of the father and mother, to be sure, were marked with mixed sensations, in which care was predominant to subdue the feelings of nature; a grown up girl had these sensations more strongly expressed, sisterly affections swayed, and had their full operation in her mind. She is a very lovely girl, and claims a large share of my sympathy. "Well," said I, "I am glad of this, and I hope the same difficulty and distress will ever attend the perpetration of a wrong thing." Gentlemen, you talk of infanticide; you blame the Chinese, because when they have too many children, they throw three or four of them into the river; you are

greatly shocked. Oh Lord, what savages! to drown their innocent children like young cats or puppies! What a happiness, you say, to be born in a christian country where no such barbarities are practised! Among the savages, it is said, that a puny child, who is unlikely to be reared, passes the same watery ordeal, throw him in, if he swims out well and good. Poor Pope, what charming lines we should have lost and he not wrote, if his imbecile childhood had been subjected to this process and experiment! But let us come home: you are not shocked when parents have brought up a fine parcel of boys, through the whole catalogue of the infirmities of childhood, small-pox, measles, chin-cough, physicians and savior illis, apothecaries, escaped them all; the boy peering into manhood, he has happily weathered every storm, passed every Scylla and Charybdis, the feast of life is spread wide, the keen appetite for enjoyment is not wanting; all the wise precepts he has learned at school from Horace and Juvenal, and Cicero, and twenty more Roman and Christian moralists, are now to be put in practice. I have hopes of this boy. No such thing, all this talent, and genius, and fine imagination, all the powers of his mind and understanding are devoted. He is to run the gauntlet of camps, and armies, and barracks; he is to stand for the question of honour; perhaps to fight a duel; perhaps to fall by the hand of a fellow officer, because a fair lady had given him the honour of her hand at a ball: perhaps he escapes these perils, and is to fall gloriously on the field of battle. Gentlemen, I hope you will analyse as you go along, I use, you see, the words that are current, though I can see no glory in this base prostitution of the very best of man

and prime of his faculties to this grim idol of war. I am a man of (I hope) some sensibility. I assure you it grieves my tender nature when I contemplate the young of the flock condemned to the slaughter; when I see the farmer making his bargain with the butcher, my nature starts up into mutiny, and I say in myself, "God forbid! the creature has but just stepped into life, it has a right to live and to enjoy the feast spread before it by the Creator's bountiful hand; ah let it live and enjoy the innocence of nature!" Now if God so clothe the field with the feast of life, and have bid creatures to be born with taste and talents for enjoyment, for cropping the meat and bounding on the verdant pasture; ah then, ah then, dear parents let your children live; forbear to spread before them temptations, allurements, and sophisticating maxims which they may not be able to withstand. If youth are ready to make mistakes, and to call disgrace by the name of honour, to call abandonment and prostitution glory: if they are disposed to substitute Roman bravery and patriotism in the place of christian fortitude, forgiveness of injuries and the great law and duty of universal benevolence, why then, as is your duty, correct this erring folly and phrensy. What folly and madness, to call yourselves christians, to say that you have been educated on principles of christian virtue, to think this and yet go forth into the world and act on principles diametrically reverse, and teach your children so to do! Does not Christ upbraid you in his gospel for this? "What father among you," says he, "who if his child ask bread, will give him a stone?" but you do it to your everlasting confusion; the beginning of which sensation I was witness to when I called in to see my friend. I leave it with you,

I enter my protest, that is all I can do, and remain,

Your constant reader,
A S.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

YOUR monthly extract from Friend's Evening Amusements must be deemed not the least interesting part of your agreeable miscellany. Such at least is my feeling. Though no astronomer, I think I have an equal right with Sir Isaac Newton himself, to derive pleasure from the view of that magnificence and admirable order, that nightly reigns in

"The spacious firmament on high,"

and directs the motion of the heavenly bodies. I do therefore frequently employ a part of my evening in remarking, and endeavouring to account for their varying positions, in relation to one another; and I think I can take a more sublime delight, and a truer satisfaction in these exercises, than the joys of theatres, or the gayest circles of fashion, could supply to their most enamoured votaries.

My declaration, that "I am no astronomer," will appear, I suppose, a very superfluous acknowledgment, when I mention the *little scruple* that I wish to have done away by some of your learned correspondents. The star in the tail of the Small Bear, is (I believe,) within 2 degrees of the North Pole. As the elevation of the pole is always equal to the latitude of the place, the distance of this star from the horizon should never exceed the latitude by more than 2 degrees. And so, we should never see this star more than 57 degrees above the horizon, or 33 degrees from the point of Zenith. Now the Polar star is, *sensibly*, dis-